

REMARKS

Applicant requests reconsideration and allowance of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1-3, 6-13, 16-24, and 27-29 are pending in the present application. Claims 1, 13, 20, 27 and 28 are the independent claims.

Claims 6, 16, and 27 have been cancelled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein. Claims 1, 7, 8, 13, 17, 18, and 20 have been amended. No new matter is believed to have been added.

Initially, Applicant acknowledges with appreciation the indication that claims 28 and 29 are allowed and that claims 6-10, 16-18, and 20-23 recite patentable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of their respective base claims and any intervening claims. Applicant has not amended any of allowed claims 28 and 29 and respectfully submits that claims 28 and 29 should remain allowed. However, Applicant has cancelled allowable claims 6 and 16 and rewritten independent claims 1 and 13 to respectively include the features of cancelled claims 6 and 16. Also, Applicant has rewritten allowable claim 20 in independent form. Claims 2, 3, and 7-12 depend from independent claim 1. Claims 17-19 and 24 depend from independent claim 13. Claims 21-23 depend from claim 20. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1-3, 7-13, and 17-24 are now in condition for allowance.

Claims 1-3, 11, 13, 19 and 27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by JP 08233287 (Tanaka). Claims 1-3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,279,342 (Van Pelt) in view of U.S. Patent No. 1,377,092 (Phaneuf). Claim 12 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Tanaka in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,349,715 (Mariyama). Claim 24 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Tanaka in view of U.S. Patent No., 5,981,929 (Maeda). Claim 27 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Tanaka in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,506,563 (Jonic). All rejections are respectfully traversed in view of the aforementioned amendments to and cancellations of claims in the subject application.

Applicant believes that the present Amendment is responsive to each of the points raised by the Examiner in the Official Action. However, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to such

matters.

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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